

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03 NSC-10 L-03 IO-14 AID-20

DRC-01 NIC-01 /104 W

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R 262110Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5547

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 4036

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: LIBERAL MEETING WITH LOPEZ

1. EMBOFF HAD CONVERSATION WITH LIBERAL LEADER CARLOS ROBERTO REINA ON OCTOBER 26 CONCERNING MEETING OF LIBERAL PARTY DELEGATION WITH CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ ON OCTOBER 24. REINA SHOWED MEMORANDUM TO EMBOFF THAT WAS PRESENTED TO LOPEZ DURING MEETING. IN ESSENCE, DOCUMENT EXPRESSES GRAVE CONCERN ABOUT PROGRESS OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH EL SALVADOR IN MEXICO AND STATES THAT PRESENT HONDURAN EFFORTS DO NOT REST UPON CONSULTATION WITH THE PEOPLE. THE MEMORANDUM PROPOSES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY COUNCIL COMPOSED OF THE OUTSTANDING LEADERS OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES, UNIONS, PRIVATE SECTOR, PROFESSIONAL BODIES, UNIVERSITY AND ARMED FORCES WHO WOULD ADVISE THE GOVERNMENT ON THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE MEMORANDUM WAS SIGNED BY REINA, MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO, JORGE BUESO ARIAS AND THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. REINA EMPHASIZED THAT THE DELEGATION'S MEETING WITH LOPEZ WAS VERY CORDIAL, AND THAT HE BELIEVES LOPEZ IS RECEPTIVE TO THE IDEA OF CONSTITUTING SUCH AN ADVISORY GROUP.

2. REINA SAID THAT THE LIBERALS FEAR EL SALVADOR IS
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RIGID IN ITS DEMANDS AND WOULD ACCEPT NO EXTERNAL

ARBITRATION OF THE DISPUTE. HE REMARKED THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS HAD REACHED AN IMPASSE IN MEXICO AND THAT THE PROSPECTS ARE VERY POOR FOR ANY POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT. HE POINTED OUT THAT EL SALVADOR IS BASING ITS NEGOTIATIONS ON SPLITTING EVENLY THE SIX POCKETS OF DISPUTED TERRITORY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. REINA SAID THAT THE NEGOTIATING TACTIC IS COMPLETELY UNACCEPTABLE BECAUSE MOST OF THE LAND IN DISPUTE IS HONDURAN TERRITORY AS PROVED BY HISTOIRIC DOCUMENTS AND MAPS. THE SALVADORANS ARE UNWILLING TO TAKE THE DISPUTE TO SOME FORM OF INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION BECAUSE THEY KNOW THEIR CASE IS WEAK.

3. REINA SAID THAT LOPEZ CANNOT NEGOTIATE A FINAL SETTLEMENT WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF HONDURAN SOCIETY AND THAT, IN FACT, LOPEZ IS UNSURE OF HOW TO CONDUCT THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID THAT THE LIBERALS AND NATIONALISTS ARE CONFERRING TOGETHER ON THE BEST METHOD OF COORDINATING EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE, AND FEEL THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ADVISORY GROUP WOULD BE A FIRST STEP IN THAT DIRECTION. REINA SAID THAT HE THOUGHT LOPEZ WANTS A RETURN TO SOME FORM OF LEGITIMACY, AND THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD OFFER HIM AN OPENING IN THAT DIRECTION.

4. REINA ALSO MENTIONED THAT THERE WOULD BE INTERNAL LIBERAL PARTY ELECTIONS FOR 86 MUNICIPAL LIBERAL COUNCILS ON NOVEMBER 4. HE SAID THAT IT WOULD BE A TEST OF STRENGTH OF HIS FORCES (THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT) AND THE FORCES OF MODESTO RODAS. ACCORDING TO REINA, THE VICTOR IN THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE CONSIDERED THE PARTY SPOKESMAN IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH OTHER SECTORS AND THE GOVERNMENT. SANCHEZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TEGUCI04036
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SANCHEZ
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TEGUCIGALPA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973108/aaaaafjk.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by martinml>; APPROVED <12 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIBERAL MEETING WITH LOPEZ
TAGS: PINT, HO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005